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26 July 2013

Dear South Lanarkshire Council,

**PLANNING APPLICATION: COVENATERS FIELD HAMILTON ROAD
BOTHWELL - HM/13/0296**

I am writing to register an objection from the Battlefields Trust about the above planning application which will cause substantial harm to the battlefield of Bothwell Bridge (1679). The Battlefields Trust is a national charity dedicated to the preservation, interpretation and presentation of battlefields as a historical and educational resource (see www.battlefieldstrust.com).

The planning application relates to Covenanter Field. This forms part of the nationally important battlefield at Bothwell Bridge which has been inventoried by Historic Scotland. As I am sure you are aware Scotland's Historic Environment Policy is clear that the status of an inventoried battlefield should be a material consideration in the planning process and that planning authorities should manage change on them in a careful and sympathetic way; respecting their value and protecting conserving or enhancing their landscape features and specific features.

The application to build houses on the site is contrary to these objectives. Although the much of the area north of the bridge has been built over, the field is an integral part of the battlefield site and provides an important insight into how the landscape would have looked at the time of the battle. As such it is of unique value in enabling interpretation of the battlefield terrain and is a vital heritage resource. In addition, investigation of Covenanter Field in 2006 recovered lead shot which was probably fired by Covenanter troops defending the bridge against government forces. This shows the archaeological potential of the site and further investigation there would likely recover more battle related artefacts, enabling a better understanding of the course of the action. Building houses on the site would destroy this irreplaceable evidence.

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By agreeing the planning application South Lanarkshire Council would be acting contrary to nationally agreed historic environment policy by destroying a vital part of a recognised and unique heritage asset. The Battlefields Trust urges the Council to reject this application and demonstrate its commitment to Scotland's historic past to the benefit of current and future generations.

I am copying this letter to Historic Scotland and Bill Gow at The Bothwell Historical Society

Frank Baldwin
Chairman Battlefields Trust